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[研究論文]

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システム化されたエッセイ作成のプロセスおよび
多文化環境におけるピア・エディティングの有効性について

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1. Introduction

Academic writing in ESL and EFL classrooms is challenging and can be a demanding task for not only instructors, but also for students. Teaching academic writing imposes a heavy workload on instructors because it involves extensive planning beforehand, facilitating active learning in the classroom, evaluating classroom performance of students, and also evaluating one's own methodology. For students, academic writing requires a lot of time and effort to produce a final product which fulfills requirements because of cultural educational differences. Chou (2011) also emphasizes this point by stating that international students in an only-English environment confront a high level of stress when tackling writing assignments because of differences in past educational experiences.

Thus, in order to create a streamlined, learner-centered environment for academic writing, peer editing was implemented in a writing intensive course. In order to include peer editing in the curriculum, a systematic process of essay writing had to be established first. After deep consideration of the essay writing process and weaving peer editing into this process, it became apparent that the validity of this newly developed system needed to be investigated. For this purpose, in a course which taught essay writing and included students from diverse cultural backgrounds, a survey was conducted. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to introduce this systematic process of essay writing and analyze the results of the survey in order to shed light on how students feel about peer editing.

2. Systematic Process of Essay Writing

To make the process of academic writing less complicated and more efficient at the same time, essay writing was divided into smaller, easier to tackle steps and sub-steps. The 9-step system which was developed is as follows:

Step 1a: Topic Brainstorming	Step 5a: Write Body
Step 1b: Topic Sharing	Step 5b: Peer Editing of Body
Step 2: Gather Information	Step 6: Write Conclusion
Step 3a: Create Outline	Step 7: Peer Editing of Entire Essay
Step 3b: Peer Review of Outline	Step 8: Revise Essay
Step 4a: Write Introduction	Step 9: Final Draft
Step 4b: Peer Editing of Introduction	

The process begins with Step 1, which is focused on topic selection. This step is divided into two sub-steps, as students are first given the opportunity to think of a topic they are interested in, which is an intrapersonal activity. Next, students share their topics with classmates, which is an interpersonal activity. While sharing topic ideas, students are able to give each other feedback or information, which will be useful for Step 2.

Step 2 involves gathering information for their essay, which is done outside class. After gathering necessary information, students will move on to Step 3a, which is creating an outline. If the instructor feels that students need support while developing an outline, this step can be done inside the classroom. However, if students are capable of creating an outline without the instructor's support, it can be done outside the classroom. Next, in Step 3b, students give each other advice on how to structure and organize their essay before starting the actual writing process. Step 3 is imperative to the entire process because the outline created and edited during this step is the blueprint for the entire essay.

Next, Step 4 involves writing and peer editing the introduction. Key aspects to focus on include the hook, key background information, proposing a problem (depending on the type of essay), and the thesis statement. Moreover, emphasizing that the introduction is a reader's first impression of one's essay and it also sets the tone for the entire essay helps students realize the importance of writing an effective introduction. These ideas can be further stressed and checked through the peer editing session.

Step 5 involves writing and peer editing of the main body. Key concepts to focus on include the topic sentence, supporting sentences, and usage of proper resources or information to support one's ideas. Regarding the number of body paragraphs, unless the essay assigned is a 3-paragraph essay, the body section will have more than one paragraph. Therefore, it is up to the discretion of the instructor whether or not to have peer editing

sessions for each paragraph or for the entire main body section. There are positives for conducting peer editing session after each paragraph/section and after the entire main body is completed. First, implementing peer editing after each paragraph/section allows writers to get feedback at an earlier stage which will help development of paragraphs written later in the essay. Next, holding a peer editing session after completing the main body allows the editor a broader perspective of what the writer is attempting to convey; therefore, advice regarding the writer's conclusion is possible.

Step 6 involves writing the conclusion. Instructors should have students focus on reiterating their thesis statement and summarizing key points from the main body. Not only this, but ending with a strong finishing statement should also be introduced.

As stated in the 9-step process at the beginning of this section, there is no individual session to peer edit the conclusion. This is because editors should re-grasp what was written in the introduction and main body in order to give comments concerning a writer's conclusion. Accordingly, Step 7 is a peer editing session of the entire essay. Writers will receive feedback from their peers and take their compositions home to revise (Step 8) before completion of their essays (Step 9).

To reiterate one vital principle underlying the systematic process of essay writing, which was introduced above, the system follows a pattern of individual work and collaborative work. In other words, the system incorporates intrapersonal and interpersonal activities. The reasoning behind this is for writers to focus on what they want to convey. At the same time, peer editing sessions will help them become aware of possible blind spots which may exist in their writing. Therefore, with more and more peer editing sessions, students will greatly improve their writing skills because their level of self-awareness will have risen significantly, and students will have also become more observant, which in hand gives them the ability to edit their peers' work more in depth.

Lastly, another critical part of the peer editing process — group formation — will be explained. Generally, groups are formed by allocating students based on their English language proficiency and individual strengths and weaknesses. For example, a student who has a high-level of understanding concerning grammatical and sentence structure but is lacking in ideas will be put into a group with a student who has medium-level understanding of grammatical and sentence structure but naturally comes up with creative ideas. The reasoning behind this is to create a peer editing environment where students are able to teach and learn from each other in order to complete an assignment, and to also gain new writing skills and general knowledge about certain topics.

3. Survey

The importance and significance of this study is not only providing a systematic process

for essay writing, which was described above, but also clarifying how students feel about peer editing, which is an essential element of the writing process. Moreover, Al Badi (2015) mentions, “[a]cademic writing can be considered as an integral part of the learning English process,” and this is an idea which the writer strongly agrees with. However, at the university where this research was conducted, intensive academic writing was not included in the English curriculum until the current (2016-2017) academic year. Therefore, by introducing academic writing as a focal point of the English curriculum and also implementing peer editing, it was crucial to examine the effects these new practices, namely peer editing, had on students.

3.1 Research Questions

In order to examine the effects of peer editing, the following research questions were posed:

1. Did peer editing help students improve mechanical (grammatical) and logical aspects of writing?
2. Is peer editing viewed as a positive or negative aspect of the writing process?

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Structure of Survey

There were three sections to the survey. The first section included 14 close-ended items. These close-ended items were based on a 4-point rating scale, which was modified from a 5-point Likert scale. For the 4-point rating scale used for this survey, the neutral choice on the typical 5-point Likert scale, “neither agree nor disagree”, was eliminated in order to gain legitimate responses from participants. The second section of the survey, which was optional, shifted to open-ended items where participants could freely write their answers to the same items as in the first section. There are two reasons for this. First, Dörnyei (2001) and Dörnyei & Taguchi (2009) state that open-ended items provide a broader range of answers which give the researcher deeper insight on a particular phenomenon. Second, Oppenheim (as cited in Dörnyei, 2001) claims that asking the same question in both closed and open form has benefits in certain situations. The third section was where participants disclosed certain personal information. The survey used for this research has been included in Appendix A, which is located at the end of this paper.

3.2.2 Participants

The participants were 11 undergraduate students who were all enrolled in a course which focused on speaking and writing skills. As indicated in Table 1 below, the participant pool was highly diverse with ages ranging from 19 to 26 years old, and also included subjects

from 10 different countries. Within the participant pool, one Japanese student was ethnically Chinese and also one American student was ethnically Korean American, and has spent time living in both the United States and the Republic of Korea. Regarding the participants' English proficiency, all participants had high TOEIC scores ranging between 820 and 975, and they were in the “competent user” and “good user” range according to their IELTS scores. These IELTS scores indicate that students have the ability to understand complex language and also have a good command of the English language.

Table 1: Participant Information

Total Number of Participants		11
Age		19 – 26 years old (Median = 21 years old)
Nationality (Ethnicity)		Chinese (Hong Kong), Filipino, Malaysian [2], Mongolian, Japanese, Japanese (Chinese), Nepali, American (Korean American), Korean, Belgian
English Proficiency	TOEIC (Listening & Reading)	850 – 975
	IELTS (Overall)	6.0 – 7.0

3.2.3 Environment

The Oxford University Press English Language Teaching Global Blog (2011) defines an ESL classroom as a classroom which is in an English-dominant country, the students are immigrants or visitors, and students have abundant contact with English outside of the classroom so they have a necessity to learn/use practical English. In contrast, an EFL classroom is not in an English-dominant country, the students share the same language or culture, and students do not have much contact with English outside of the classroom so they do not have a necessity to learn/use practical English.

Based on the definition above, the classroom environment where this research was conducted in an ESL classroom against the backdrop of an EFL environment, a Japanese university. However, the students were from 10 countries and, excluding one student, all students have to complete their academic work in English only, so this would be classified as an ESL environment.

3.3 Findings

Items included in the survey asked participants to answer questions concerning their overall experience with peer editing, type of skills that were improved, any psychological effects peer editing might have had on students, and also mental processes involved with peer editing. The results from the survey are presented below in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of Survey (Part 1)¹⁾

	1 (Strongly Disagree)	2 (Disagree)	3 (Agree)	4 (Strongly Agree)
1. Peer editing helped improve my writing skills	0 0.0%	1 9.1%	0 0.0%	10 90.9%
2. Peer editing helped me understand others' views	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3 27.3%	8 72.7%
3. Through peer editing, my grammatical understanding improved	0 0.0%	1 9.1%	5 45.5%	5 45.5%
4. Through peer editing, my sentence structure improved	0 0.0%	2 18.2%	3 27.3%	6 54.5%
5. Through peer editing, organizing my ideas/ thoughts improved	0 0.0%	3 27.3%	5 45.5%	3 27.3%
6. Through peer editing, my ability to convey ideas/ thoughts improved	0 0.0%	3 27.3%	4 36.4%	4 36.4%
7. I enjoyed peer editing sessions	0 0.0%	2 18.2%	3 27.3%	6 54.5%
8. I felt embarrassed or vulnerable during peer editing sessions	5 45.5%	3 27.3%	2 18.2%	1 9.1%
9. I did not want to share my writing with others	8 72.2%	2 18.2%	1 9.1%	0 0.0%
10. I did not want to accept others' ideas about my writing	8 72.2%	3 27.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
11. I experienced a clash of culture during peer editing sessions	6 54.5%	5 45.5%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
12. I felt incompatible with my partner during peer editing sessions	5 45.5%	3 27.3%	2 18.2%	1 9.1%
13. There are times when I could not understand opinions and/or advice from my partners	2 18.2%	5 45.5%	3 27.3%	1 9.1%
14. I had to make a lot of effort to understand the writings of my classmates	3 27.3%	5 45.5%	1 9.1%	2 18.2%

The result for Item 1, which is an item that questions students about their overall experience with peer editing, indicates that 10 students out of 11 strongly agree that peer editing has helped them improve their writing skills. In Part 2 of the survey, where participants were allowed to write comments, one student mentioned, “Some of [my classmates] really helped me [with] my essays. Comments and suggestions, etc.” The one student who did not feel that peer editing helped him/her improve their writing skills comes from a cultural background where English is learned as a second language; therefore, his/her level is higher than that of other students. This contextual difference in learning English suggests that participants in peer editing sessions should have not only similar language proficiency, but also similar backgrounds in learning English in order to provide a more satisfying experience.

Item 2 attempts to determine whether peer editing aids students with understanding their classmates' views, and the results clearly show that peer editing does so. For this item in Part 2 of the survey, there were three comments from participants: Comment 1, "As I can discuss things that I am interested with my friends that have different views." Comment 2, "It really did broaden my understanding in terms as where the writer is coming from." Comment 3, "Sometimes it was really hard to understand other's writing because their English skills are much higher." From these comments, it is apparent that having access to others' views helps not only to deepen understanding about one's own composition, but about another person's composition as well. However, a significant difference in English language proficiency can be a barrier which affects the efficacy of peer editing sessions.

Next, Items 3, 4, 5, and 6, represent the mechanical aspect of writing, which involve grammatical understanding/accuracy and sentence structure, and also includes cognitive aspects of writing, which involves the process of organizing one's ideas and conveying ideas. The results for Item 3 through Item 6 show that the majority of students feel that peer editing helped them improve in these areas. The result for 3, dealing with grammatical understanding, indicates that peer editing is effective because 10 out of 11 students answered positively. The result for Item 4 shows that 9 out of 11 students feel peer editing helped them with improving their sentence structure. The results for Item 5 and Item 6 show that 8 out of 11 students responded positively, while 3 students responded negatively to these items. As previously mentioned, Item 5, which focuses on organizing ideas, and Item 6, which focuses on conveying ideas, are items dealing with cognitive aspects of writing. Although the majority of students answered positively to these items, 3 students felt that peer editing did not help them improve in these areas. In Part 2 of the survey, unfortunately, those who answered negatively to these items did not leave any comments. However, one student who responded positively commented, "[Peer editing] has [helped me improve] because the paper goes through several people and you get to hear their perspectives and comments." One important idea, which became apparent after reviewing these results, is that careful consideration of group formation for peer editing is imperative in order to provide students with the best environment possible to improve their writing. Grouping students by only their English proficiency will not always help them develop their cognitive writing abilities.

Item 7 through Item 10 and Item 12 deal with psychological effects peer editing had on students. From the results of these items, it can be said that the majority of students enjoyed peer editing sessions (Item 7), felt mentally safe during sessions (Item 8), were cooperative (Item 9), were open-minded towards their classmates' feedback (Item 10), and had built good relationships with their partners (Item 12). Regarding item 7, one participant mentioned, "Yes, I do enjoy peer editing sessions. Being in different groups all the time, I am able to talk more with my classmates. I get to know them better." This comment shows that peer editing

is not just a technique to improve writing skills, but it can also be used as a technique to create a more friendly classroom environment. Next, there were two negative comments for Item 8, which is concerned with mental vulnerability: Comment 1, “Only whenever I have to write something personal [, I felt vulnerable].” Comment 2, “[I felt vulnerable] sometimes when I have to admit my English [is not good].” Comment 1 sheds light upon which type of writing assignments are suitable and not suitable for peer editing. In other words, writing assignments which involve writing about personal experiences might not be suitable for peer editing sessions because they might create a psychological situation where the writer is vulnerable. Comment 2 is a clear example of grouping students with the wrong people. Even though grouping a student who has lower English language proficiency with a student who has very high proficiency would be beneficial to the former student, it can also be a factor of feeling inferior, which can have negative effects on a student’s learning process.

Item 11, 13, and 14 deal with mental processes involved with peer editing. The results for Item 11 distinctly show that even though the classroom dynamic is very multicultural, culture clashes or cultural misunderstandings did not occur during peer editing sessions. The results for Item 13 indicates that misunderstanding of opinions or advice is rare amongst students in this class; however, there are still a few students who experience misunderstandings during peer editing sessions. Misunderstandings are not something which should not be looked down upon, because misunderstandings are the first step in gaining a better understanding of ideas. The last item, Item 14, asks students if they had to make a lot of effort in order to understand others’ writings. Most students answered that they do not need to make a lot of effort, but this might be related to the fact that this class is composed of students who have a high level of English proficiency, so they are able to convey their ideas in English smoothly.

Overall, from the results and analysis above, it is apparent that students view peer editing in a multicultural classroom environment as a positive pedagogical tool. Students were able to improve their overall academic writing ability while gaining deeper insight into how others view their writing. However, it is important to note that the students who were involved in peer editing have a relatively high level of English proficiency, and this can be perceived as a vital factor in the largely positive response towards peer editing sessions which were held in class.

4. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to introduce a systematic process of essay writing, and analyze the results of a survey which show how students feel about peer editing. In Section 2 of this paper, a systematic process of essay writing was proposed. The 9-step process includes sub-steps for cooperative learning opportunities — peer editing. Within this process,

suggestions of how and where peer editing should be conducted is also considered. Furthermore, pedagogical aspects of essay writing, such as intrapersonal activities and interpersonal activities, and insights on group formation for peer editing were described. Implementation of such a process involves consideration of various aspects. In particular, the overall targets of the course, language proficiency of students, textbook coverage, and difficulty of the assigned essay need to be considered.

In Section 3, results of the survey were explored. On the whole, participants' experience with peer editing was positive because they were able to improve their writing skills from both mechanical and also mental aspects. Yet, as previously mentioned (at the end of Section 3), the high level of English proficiency in this particular class is a factor that cannot be ignored. Moreover, students who are in this class not only have a high level of language ability, but they also possess a high level of metalinguistic ability. It is this metalinguistic ability which enables peer editing sessions to be beneficial for students because they are able to explain grammatical concepts or lexical nuances effectively. On the other hand, if students who have lower metalinguistic ability are placed in the same group, this will affect students' experience and final product greatly. Therefore, it is imperative for instructors to create groups not randomly, but after thorough deliberation of individual linguistic proficiency and cognitive capacity.

To further develop better pedagogical methods for academic writing in ESL and/or EFL environments, more investigation on this topic is necessary. Specifically, investigation of peer editing in classes with students who have a different level of English proficiency is desirable. Implementing peer editing in a lower-level English class might provide answers on how to facilitate cooperative learning in an environment where students also need to have their English proficiency, metalinguistic ability, and critical thinking ability nurtured. Thus, continuing this research to include focus on different levels of English proficiency will provide instructors of academic writing in ESL and EFL environments clues about how to guide students through the writing process and support creating a more streamlined and active learning environment.

Note

- 1) Percentages were rounded off to the first decimal; therefore, the sum of certain items is not exactly equal to 100%.

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Appendix A:

Survey About Peer Editing in Practical Communication

Last semester, we held peer editing sessions multiple times, and all of you probably have different experiences. Therefore, the purpose of this survey is to find out the actual effects peer editing has had on this class. Please answer all of the questions to the best of your knowledge and ability. Moreover, your answers will be used for only academic purposes and any personal information will be considered highly confidential.

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1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree

Put a check (✓) in the box which is most appropriate.

	1	2	3	4
1. Peer editing helped improve my writing skills				
2. Peer editing helped me understand others' views				
3. Through peer editing, my grammatical understanding improved				
4. Through peer editing, my sentence structure improved				
5. Through peer editing, organizing my ideas/thoughts improved				
6. Through peer editing, my ability to convey ideas/thoughts improved				
7. I enjoyed peer editing sessions				
8. I felt embarrassed or vulnerable during peer editing sessions				
9. I did not want to share my writing with others				
10. I did not want to accept others' ideas about my writing				
11. I experience a clash of culture during peer editing sessions				
12. I felt incompatible with my partner during peer editing sessions				
13. There are times when I could not understand opinions and/or advice from my partners				
14. I had to make a lot of effort to understand the writings of my classmates				

(Survey continues on the next page)

If you have comments, please write them below.

	Comments
1. Peer editing helped improve my writing skills	
2. Peer editing helped me understand others' views	
3. Through peer editing, my grammatical understanding improved	
4. Through peer editing, my sentence structure improved	
5. Through peer editing, organizing my ideas/ thoughts improved	
6. Through peer editing, my ability to convey ideas/ thoughts improved	
7. I enjoyed peer editing sessions	
8. I felt embarrassed or vulnerable during peer editing sessions	
9. I did not want to share my writing with others	
10. I did not want to accept others' ideas about my writing	
11. I experience a clash of culture during peer editing sessions	
12. I felt incompatible with my partner during peer editing sessions	
13. There are times when I could not understand opinions and/or advice from my partners	
14. I had to make a lot of effort to understand the writings of my classmates	

Personal Information

Age: _____

Nationality (Ethnicity): _____

TOEIC Score: _____ TOEFL Score: _____ IELTS Score: _____